

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method for distracting, in a given direction, and supporting two tissue surfaces is provided. A plurality of wafers are consecutively inserted between the two tissue surfaces to create a column of wafers. The column of wafers is oriented between the tissue surfaces so as to expand in the given direction as the wafers are consecutively added to the column. A wafer insertion apparatus includes a wafer cartridge configured to carry a stack of wafers to be inserted into the space, a track assembly including a first track for carrying a wafer toward the space, a second track and means for preventing retrograde movement of a wafer within the first track, an advancer/pusher mechanism slidably disposed within the second track and operable on a wafer within the first track to advance the wafer along the first track, and an advancement gun supporting the wafer cartridge and track assembly and having a trigger operably coupled to the advancer/pusher mechanism to propel the mechanism along the second track.